

**Testimony of John M. Tonaki,
State Public Defender to the Senate Committee on Judiciary
and Labor**

April 15, 2015

GM 613: Nomination of Thomas Otake to the Defender Council

Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members:

It is a pleasure to support the nomination of Thomas Otake to the Defender Council. Mr. Otake is a prominent Honolulu trial attorney who, as a member of the council, will assist the Office of the Public Defender in fulfilling our mission of zealous and effective representation of indigent persons charged with criminal offenses.

Mr. Otake is a former deputy public defender. Since entering the private practice of law, he has specialized in criminal defense. He has tried difficult cases in both state and federal court. Mr. Otake earned his law degree from the University of Hawaii, Richardson School of Law in 2001. Following his graduation from law school, he served as law clerk to the Honorable Marcia Waldorf, Judge of the First Circuit Court (retired). Mr. Otake understands the criminal justice system thoroughly and the Public Defender's essential role in that system. We would be privileged to have Mr. Otake serve on the Defender Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard on this matter.